

NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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DATE: April 9, 2019

CONTACT: Rori Paloski

SUBJECT: Incidental take notice for Buffalo County

MADISON -- The proposed Great River State Trail – Winona Connector project may result in the "incidental taking" of a rare frog under an authorization the Department of Natural Resources proposes to issue for the project. Incidental take refers to the unintentional loss of individual endangered or threatened animals or plants that does not put the overall population of the species at risk.

This project involves constructing a new trail alongside State Highway 54/35, within the highway right of way, adjacent to the backwaters of the Mississippi River. This trail project will begin at Buffalo Town Park and end at Aghaming Park in the City of Winona.

The presence of the state endangered Blanchard's cricket frog (*Acris blanchardi*) has been confirmed in the vicinity of the project site. DNR staff determined that the proposed project may result in the incidental taking of some frogs.

The Department has concluded that the proposed project will minimize the impacts to the species by adhering to conservation measures; is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence and recovery of the state population of the species or the whole plant-animal community of which it is a part; and has benefit to the public health, safety or welfare that justifies the action.

The conservation measures to minimize the adverse effect on the endangered species will be incorporated into the proposed Incidental Take Authorization. Copies of the jeopardy assessment and background information on the Blanchard's cricket frog are available by searching the DNR website for [incidental take public notice](#) or upon request from Rori Paloski (608-264-6040 or rori.paloski@wi.gov). The department is requesting comments from the public through May 9, 2019 regarding project-related impacts to the Blanchard's cricket frog. Public comments should be sent to Rori Paloski, WDNR, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921 or rori.paloski@wi.gov.

DNR Office of Communications. DNR Spokesperson: Sarah Hoyer (608) 267-2773